

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-33 (canceled)

34. (currently amended) A polishing apparatus comprising:

a polishing platen ~~the polishing platen~~ having a first central region and a first peripheral region, the first central region having a first front surface and the first peripheral region having a second front surface;

a polishing pad overlying the polishing platen and including an under pad, with both the polishing pad and the under pad having a second central region and a second peripheral region, the second central region having a first front surface and the second peripheral region having a second front surface, wherein at least a portion of the second front surface lies below the first front surface; and

a carrier overlying the polishing pad, wherein the polishing platen is further characterized as having a tapered region, and wherein at least a portion of said second front surface of said second peripheral region of the polishing pad overlies the tapered region.

35. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the peripheral region comprises a horizontal region.

36. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the peripheral region comprises a tapered region.

37. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the peripheral region comprises a grooved region.

38. (original) The apparatus, of claim 37, wherein the grooved region is further characterized as being U-shaped.

39. (original) The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the grooved region is further characterized as being V shaped.